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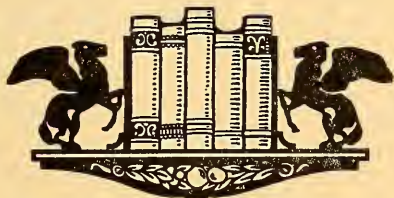
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The Blind.

OCCASIONAL PAPER.

No. 14.

APRIL 20TH, 1901.

All communications for the next number must be sent on or before June 22nd, to Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Hon. Editor, 53, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

The Editor does not of necessity identify himself with opinions which may be expressed in the signed articles or in letters of correspondents, and the right is reserved of not printing any letter which may seem not to come within the limits of a discussion likely to be profitable. Letters must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

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EDITORIAL.

Our readers will be much indebted, we feel sure, to Mr. W. H. Illingworth, Head Master of the School for the Blind, at Edinburgh, for allowing us to print in this number his valuable paper on the expediency of training blind children by blind teachers, which was read at the International Congress, held at Paris last July. The subject has always been one of deep interest, and more so in recent years, as since 1896 the Board of Education have practically endorsed the system by recognising "The Smith Training College" at Norwood as a Training College for Blind Teachers of the Blind, where certificates can be obtained as in the Training Colleges for sighted people.

HENRY J. WILSON.

NOTES.

1. It is with much regret that we have to announce the death of Colonel Mansfield Turner, on the 31st January, at the age of 72. Col. Turner did much to enlist public interest in the welfare of the Blind, and just 35 years ago (in 1866) he was the promoter of the Conference then held at the Institution for the Blind at Birmingham, when ten different Institutions were represented. In the same year he also in conjunction with Mr. William Harris (to whom those interested in the Blind are deeply indebted

for the reprints of many valuable books and leaflets about the blind and their industries), circulated amongst the Institutions a Guide to Institutions and Charities, &c., for the Blind. In 1867 Col. Turner took an active part in another Conference held at Willis' Rooms, in London, and in 1876 mainly by his influence and financial support, the Cottage Home for blind women in connection with the Leicester Institution for the Blind was opened. These few lines are sufficient to show that the Blind have lost a wise and true friend, and although on account of illness he has for some time been unable to take an active part in discussions, he always watched with deep interest what was being done for the Blind, and was ever ready to benefit them by his advice and help.

2. We regret to announce the sudden death last February of Mr. Nicholson, who was House Governor of the Royal Victoria School for the Blind, at Newcastle, for many years.

3. Lieutenant-Col. Sydney Selfe, R.A. has been appointed Secretary of the Association for the Blind, at 258, Tottenham Court Road, in the place of the late Col. Lewis.

4. Mr. C. E. Cole, who is an assistant master at his old school, Worcester Blind College, took his M.A. degree at Oxford on March 14th.

5. Mr. Lane, an undergraduate of Oxford, has been awarded another prize at Worcester College for good work.

6. We wish to correct an error in our last number, paragraph 22, where we stated that the two teachers belonging to the Bangor Home Teaching Society for the Blind are blind. We are informed that both of them have good sight.

7. A gathering of a very pleasant character took place on 26th February, at the General Institution for the Blind, Birmingham, when all the workers in the Trade Department assembled in the Music Room to present a testimonial to the

Secretary and Trade Manager, Mr. Henry Stainsby, who has just attained his majority in connection with the Institution. The Testimonial consisted of an Illuminated Address, and a handsome gladstone bag, with brushes in ebony, and sterling silver mounted fittings. The presentation was made by one of the oldest among the Blind Workers. The text of the address is as follows :—

“We, the Workers in the Trade Department, finding that you have just completed twenty one years in various capacities at the above Institution, desire to express our high appreciation of, and gratitude for, all that you have accomplished on behalf of the Blind. The great increase month by month in the Trade receipts, and the augmented amounts which have been weekly paid in wages to the blind workers, are chiefly due to your untiring energy and perseverance ; and we know that, having the general welfare of the Blind so much at heart, you have caused this Institution to be placed second to none in the country, and to be known and esteemed in many parts of the world for what is being done in it both commercially and educationally.

We ask your acceptance of this Address, and of the travelling bag which accompanies it, as an evidence of our feelings towards you ; and we trust that God, Who orders all things as He sees best, may spare you for many years to occupy the position you now hold, and to continue your noble work.”

8. Dr. E. J. Hopkins, the well-known organist at the Temple Church, died last February, and it may interest our readers to know that the hymn, “God is love, His mercy brightens,” was sung at the side of the grave by the pupils of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, and the sweet music to which the words are set was composed by Dr. Hopkins especially for them to sing at a meeting at Grosvenor House. Dr. Hopkins had been closely connected with the College since 1874, and he clung to the work there until the very last. He said that he could not think of giving up “his dear boys and girls.”

He was much beloved by them as well as by the staff. Dr. Mann of Cambridge was so touched by the singing of the hymn at the graveside that he wrote Dr. Campbell a letter from which the following is an extract: "I wish to ask you to convey to your choir a musician's sincere thanks for their lovely music at the side of dear old Daddie Hopkins' grave. *It was most beautiful. It went straight to my heart.* May I say that I felt sure it came from feeling hearts. I cannot tell you how it touched me. It was a beautiful finish to a grand old organist's life."

9. Twenty thousand pounds have been left by the late Mr. George J. Scale to the Mayor and Corporation of Portsmouth, to be invested, and the interest thereon is to be paid in pensions of £30 a year to blind persons of 30 years of age and upwards, who are in necessitous circumstances, and who were born and still reside in Hampshire.

10. It has recently been decided at a meeting of the Governors of the Midland Institution for the Blind at Nottingham, after much consideration, to discontinue the education and boarding of the Blind under 16 years of age.

There has for years been urgent need of improvement and extension of the buildings and premises, and the work has therefore been carried on under serious difficulties.

The great improvement in the educational training, and the introduction of better and more thorough educational methods, together with the expansion of the industrial departments which have marked recent years, have still further accentuated the demand for greatly increased accommodation, and have thus produced a state of things which could not possibly continue.

Four courses were suggested for dealing with the question:—

1. To make such reduction of the existing number of indoor pupils as would give after certain alterations sufficient accommodation to those who remain.
2. To give up the educational side of the Institution altogether and to convert it into a Technical and Industrial Establishment only.

3. To convert the existing workshops into dormitories and for scholastic purposes, and to take fresh industrial premises elsewhere.

4. To establish a new and thoroughly equipped Institution for both educational and industrial purposes on a fresh site elsewhere.

It was eventually decided to adopt No. 4 scheme, provided sufficient funds could be raised for the purpose. This scheme however was found to be impracticable, partly owing to the inability or unwillingness of the School Boards to provide sums for capital purposes, and partly to the fact that persons who might be looked to for large sums were unwilling to make contributions towards carrying on a work which has now become a national one.

The Scheme of a new Institution had therefore to be abandoned, and Nos. 1 and 3 alternatives being also deemed inadvisable, there was nothing left but to adopt No. 2, and the Institution will therefore cease to be a certified school under the Blind and Deaf Act on and after June 30th next. Although compelled to relinquish the care of the young blind, there is still a large field of usefulness left for the Institution, as the industrial training and the care and employment of the Adult Blind are still left to private effort, and the cutting off of the educational branch will allow for a better and a fuller growth and more concentrated energy in other branches of the work.

It is hoped to convert the Institution into a thoroughly good and well equipped Technical School for the reception of those, who, having attained the age of 16 years, require to be put in a way of earning their living, and also by means of enlarged and improved workshops to afford additional employment for those who have been trained.

11. The Elementary School for the Blind at Norwich was closed on March 31st, and the Institution is being continued as a School for those above 16 years of age, and an Asylum for the aged.

12. No Report on Schools for the Blind and Deaf has been published by the Board of Education since 1899, and the

report issued that year contained H.M. senior inspector's ^{tate-}ment only for the year ended 31st August, 1898. We understand that another report is in preparation, and that probably the reports on special schools will henceforth appear in alternate years. We cannot help wishing that these reports could be published more up-to-date, as at present they are but records of ancient history.

13. The East London Home and School for Blind Children has removed from Northumberland House, Lower Clapton Road, to 2 and 4, Warwick Road, Upper Clapton, N.E., where alterations have been carried out to meet the requirements of the Board of Education.

14. The Barclay Home for blind girls at Brighton, started in 1893, has been recently enlarged and extensive alterations and additions are being made. The Committee have bought the freehold property of Nos. 23 and 25, Wellington Road, and are adapting the buildings to meet the requirements of the Board of Education. There are 34 inmates. A new building for laundry work will soon be erected.

15. *The Standard* of January 30th gives the following paragraph:—"The sale of the site and buildings of the Indigent Blind Schools, situated in St. George's Circus, S.E., has been completed. The consideration money arranged by Mr. Reginald Roumieu, who acted as surveyor to the Schools, was £140,000. The purchasers were the Baker-street and Waterloo Railway Company, who were represented by their surveyor, Mr. Leslie R. Vigers."

16. We are pleased to note that the Society for the Blind at Wakefield has recently started a workroom, where seven men and four women are already employed. We hope that this new departure, which will prove of great benefit to the deserving blind who are anxious to work, may be well supported locally and that it may be as successful as the other small Yorkshire workshops at Whitby and Middlesborough.

17. The 61st report of Henshaw's Asylum for the year ended December 31st, 1900, is published, and we are glad to notice that an excellent leaflet on prevention of blindness accompanies each copy of the report. It is pleasing to note in Dr. Glascott's remarks on the 24 pupils admitted during 1900, whom he examined, that "in only *one* case could the cause of blindness be attributed to purulent ophthalmia of the newly born, a great advance upon the statistics of 'preventible causes of blindness' of a few years back." At the close of the year there were 181 in the Asylum, of whom 80 were children. Fifteen pupils attended the Incorporated Society of Musicians' examination and all passed (six with honours). The legacies last year amounted to £2,276. We notice with satisfaction that 127 of the outside blind have been aided during the year to the amount of £870, and that in addition 38 men and 9 women have been regularly employed at the outdoor workshops in the upkeep of which the expenditure exceeded the income by £699.

18. The report of the Reading Blind Aid Society for the year ended the 31st of January last, is very satisfactory, thanks to the energetic organisation of the work by Mr. Hugh E. Walford, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer. Regular payments are made to 29 persons living in their own homes, and only those are assisted who were born in the town or have been resident in it for seven years. The endowment fund now amounts to £1521. There are no office expenses, as Mr. Walford carries on the work at his private residence.

19. The Seventh Annual Report of the Isle of Wight Society for the Blind has been issued. This Society, which has sixteen local secretaries in various parts of the Island, not only has a teacher for visiting and instructing the blind in a trade, but also assists some of them by providing materials for basket making, &c., free of cost. Another most important branch of the work of this Society is the provision of remedial appliances for the "alleviation of diseases of the eye likely to lead to blindness." There are 78 blind persons on the Island, of whom eleven are of independent means.

20. The Annual Meeting of the Birkenhead Society for the Blind, was held on January 17th. During 1900, there were 148 blind persons on the Society's books, and the teacher paid 1912 visits. The Society has been started only two years, and we are glad to notice that the Committee already wish to extend their work, and to establish "a workshop for the production and sale of articles made by the blind." The starting of a Home Teaching Society has often proved an inestimable boon to the blind in showing sighted people how many blind there are who are willing and anxious to work, if suitable employment can be found for them.

21. The forty-fifth annual report of the London Home Teaching Society for the Blind was held on March 5th at Lord Fortescue's house—Lord Midleton presided, and the chief speakers were the Bishop of Rochester, and the Earl of Stamford. The Society maintains 14 blind teachers, each of whom has a library of from 400 to 500 books. The number of the cases on the register in 1900 was 1,822, and the teachers paid 35,588 visits.

22. The first annual meeting of the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society was held on February 27th, when the deputy Lord Mayor of Manchester presided. This Society which has been formed by uniting the Lancashire Mutual Aid Society for the Blind and the Blind Relief Society, has for its object the betterment of over 500 blind men and women in Manchester and Salford by means of a Sick and Benefit Club, a Home at the seaside. providing employment, visiting, &c. A paper read at the meeting by Miss I. M. Heywood, Hon. Sec., who is devoting herself to improve the condition of the Blind, gives a most sad account of them in Manchester—many being in the Unions or begging; others, although having been taught a trade, unable to start through lack of means; others standing at street corners with matches or laces, &c.

23. The Report of the Fund for the Blind of Accrington, &c., for the year 1900 is published. There are 84 blind persons

on the register who are visited regularly by a blind man. We are pleased to notice that special efforts are made by this Society and with marked success to prevent blindness. As the Report truly says "This work of 'prevention' is of pressing need."

24. The 41st annual meeting of the Plymouth Institution for the Blind was held on February 21st, when the Ven. the Archdeacon of Totnes presided. The number of persons benefited last year was 73, including 21 non-residents. The sales amounted to £1466. There are 18 pupils in the School.

25. The report of the Northampton and County Association for the Blind for 1900 is issued. There are 14 persons employed in the workshops and a Sick Benefit Society has been started. A legacy has been left to create a Trust by which pensions of 5/- a week will be paid to some of the indigent blind.

26. The Report of the Phoenix Home for Blind Women, 44, Alma Square, London, N.W., (founded 1861), for the year ended September 29th last, has reached us. There is accommodation for eight inmates, and the subscriptions and donations amounted to £110 last year.

27. The following tabular statement, kindly sent by the Manager of the United Institution for the Blind and Deaf and Dumb at Leeds, shows the progress in that Institution during the last ten years:—

						1890.	1900.
Blind Workers in	Brush Department	..	..	..	..	15	31
"	"	Basket	"	..	..	8	12
"	"	Caning	"	..	..	9	4
"	"	Mat	"	..	..	—	8
"	"	Tuning	"	..	..	—	1
"	"	Hawker	..	..	..	—	1
Total number of workers ..						32	57

					1890.	1900.
Wages paid to the Blind in Brush Department..					£108	£547
"	"	"	Basket	" ..	163	336
"	"	"	Caning	" ..	73	80
"	"	"	Mat	" ..	—	162
"	"	"	Tuning	" ..	—	91
"	"	"	Hawker		—	19
					£344	1,235
Goods sold	..	..	..	..	£3,512	7,166
Total Goods sold in 10 years	..	..				£52,690
" Wages paid to Blind ditto	..	..				8,737
" Relief to Outdoor Blind ditto	..	..				2,472

The recaning of chairs has considerably fallen off on account of the introduction of perforated wood bottoms, &c.. Most of the women can do both chair caning and brush-drawing, every learner being taught both branches. This plan secures an interchange when required by pressure of work in either departments.

There is a Sick and Funeral Benefit Society, managed by the workers themselves. In the ten years there has been paid to sick members £101 10s. 6d., and funeral benefit £14., and there is a balance in hand of £135. There are four pupils at the Royal Normal College whose fees are partly paid by means of concerts given by ex-pupils of the College living in the Leeds district. £90 have already been expended, and £134 remain in hand. There is also a pension fund, wherefrom £5 a year are paid as a supplement to seven old blind people, besides special relief to many deserving cases.

28. There is no wonder that there are many blind beggars still in our streets, when people are so easily gulled as in the following case of audacious imposition reported in *The Bradford Observer* of December last. At the Bradford City Police Court, a father aged 34, and his son aged 15, were charged with begging, and "in continuing his evidence, the detective stated that the bearer of the board had his eyes closed as if he were blind, and

the boy leaned in a pathetic way against his father, whom he clutched by the right arm. The father continually moaned in a low tone, "Pity us; pity us." The spectacle excited the sympathy of the people, and a large number of contributions were given. The officer's suspicions were aroused, and he spoke to the man, who immediately opened his eyes, and then pretended to be lame. Upon taking the couple into custody they were searched, and no fewer than 410 coins were found in the man's possession, consisting of 284 pennies, 124 halfpence, a shilling, and a threepenny piece—£1 10s. 1d. The boy had in his pockets copper amounting to several shillings. The man admitted at the time that the entire sum had been collected in Bradford within four hours. The boy was remanded to the workhouse, and the stipendiary magistrate in sentencing the elder prisoner to a month's imprisonment with hard labour, expressed regret that this was the most severe punishment which the law permitted for such an offence."

29. The following books in Braille have been added to the Free Public Library, Oxford:—The Bible, The Prayer Book, Dr. Brown's Three Lectures on Early English Church History, Shakespeare's "Coriolanus" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the first, second and fourth books of Xenophon's "Anabasis"; Cicero's Orations "Against Catiline," "On Behalf of Archæas," and "Against Verres"; Lectures 12 and 13 of Maine's "Early Institutions."

30. Mr. Tadasu Yoshimoto, a Japanese gentleman, is now in Europe. One object of his visit is the collection of information which may enable him to start a college in his native country to prepare the Blind for the Universities.

31. The German Emperor has presented the sum of 90,000 marks which have been collected by the three Old Prussian Grand Lodges on the occasion of the bi-centenary of Prussia, to the Asylum for the Blind at Berlin.

32. Among the atrocities committed by the Chinese during the past year, we have to record the massacre of the officials and boys of Mr. Murray's Blind School in Pekin. Mr. Murray had received an assurance from the Chinese authorities that they would protect his School, if he himself would retire to one of the legations. This he did, but when the siege of the legations was over, and he returned to his School, he found it in ruins. Some of the boys had been massacred, but the girls were able to escape the fate of their unfortunate comrades by flight.

33. There is apparently a general feeling that the time has nearly arrived when another conference on matters connected with the Blind should be held in England. Whether it is best to hold it in London or in Manchester, and whether this year or next are questions now under consideration. The last conference was held at Birmingham in 1894, and the preceding ones were at York in 1883, and at Norwood in 1890. In 1874 a Special Committee was convened by the Council of the Charity Organisation Society "to consider what more could be done to promote the welfare of the Blind, and especially their industrial training," and a valuable report was presented to the Council on February 21st, 1876. On July 21st of the same year, the School Management Committee of the London School Board held a conference to consider "the different methods adopted for the instruction of the Blind," and published their conclusions. In addition to these conferences, much valuable information was collected about the Blind when the scheme for the administration of Mr. Henry Gardner's legacy of £300,000 for their benefit was before the Court of Chancery in 1880, and also in the report of the Royal Commission on the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, &c., issued in 1889.

The first of the biennial conferences in America was held at Indianapolis in 1871, and the first of the triennial conferences in Europe at Vienna in 1873.

RECENT LITERATURE.

During the past three months the following works have been stereotyped in Braille by the British and Foreign Blind Association, 33, Cambridge Square, Hyde Park, London, W.

	s.	d.
Clarke, Mrs. Charles, Plain Cooking Recipes as taught in the National School of Cookery, vol. i.	3	0
Dickens, C., Pickwick Papers, vol. xii. (interpointed) . .	3	0
" " " vol. xiii. " . .	3	0
" " " vol. xiv. (completion) (interpointed)	2	6
Hope, Anthony, Rupert of Hentzan, being a sequel to The Prisoner of Zenda, vol. i. (interpointed) . .	2	9
Ditto " " vol. ii. " . .	2	9
(to be completed in 4 vols.)		
Nursery Rhymes, Aunt Louisa's Book of.	3	6
Race Game (Steeplechase)	3	0
Card " ("Auction")	1	9
St. Matthew's Gospel in Foochow, vol. ii. (completion)	2	4
Classics without Octaves, arranged by André Baptiste, No. 1.	0	4
Ditto Nos. 2 to 24.	0	3

In Moon's type by Moon's Society, 104, Queen's Road, Brighton:—

	s.	d.
Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers, vol. i.	2	9
" " " " vols. ii., iii., iv. . . each	3	0
Three Reading Books for Beginners	0	5
John Halifax, Gentleman, (second edition) vol. i. . .	4	6
The Life of Christ, by Dr. Stalker, vols. i. and ii. each	4	6

In Braille at the Royal Blind Asylum and School, West Craigmillar, Edinburgh:—

"Hora Jucunda," vol. xxxii. (Oct. to Dec., 1900.) . .	4	6
Ditto vol. xxxiii., Jan. to Mar., 1901 (interpointed)	4	6
Nelson's "Royal Osborne" Geographical Reader, Book V., vol. i. (interpointed)	4	6
"The Craigmillar Harp" (musical) 1900	5	0

SHOULD THE TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF BLIND CHILDREN BE ENTRUSTED TO BLIND TEACHERS? IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?

A paper read at the International Congress, Paris, July, 1900.

By MR. W. H. ILLINGWORTH.

Headmaster of the Royal Blind Asylum and School, West Craigmillar, Edinburgh.

Introduction. Having had the charge of one of the most important and successful Schools for the Blind in Great Britain for a period of fifteen years, I have no hesitation in answering the above question in the affirmative; and will strive, in the short space of time allotted to me for this paper, to bring forward such arguments, founded on direct observation, as shall tend to justify the position which I have taken up.

Qualification of a Blind Teacher. Of course, it is a *sine qua non* that the blind teacher to be employed shall be one who—

- (a) Has had the advantage of a sound education.
- (b) Is possessed of the power of self-control in a high degree.
- (c) Is enthusiastic and determined to succeed.
- (d) Is kind and sympathetic, and at the same time firm.
- (e) Is true to his word.

Given these qualifications, a blind teacher for ordinary class-work and for much out-of-school duty also, is, if anything, preferable to one who can see. The question of supervision, correction of bad habits, etc., I will deal with later on.

To be successful a Teacher should be able to bring himself to the level of his Pupil. It is almost, if not quite, as impossible for a seeing person to realise what it is to be blind, and for him to enter into and sympathise with the difficulties of his blind pupil, as it is for a congenitally blind person to enter into and share with one who can see the beauty of a glorious picture or landscape.

In Seeing Schools. Those who have charge of large educational establishments—I mean ordinary schools for seeing pupils—know to their cost what difficulty is experienced in procuring teachers who have the power, or the

will, or both, to bring themselves down to the child's level; that is, to be able to become for the time a child again, so as to see the difficulties of the lesson, or the meaning of an apparently stupid answer to a question, from the child's point of view. A difficulty explained away in child's language; a lesson illustrated in childish fashion, appeals at once and directly to the child's mind, and the impression remains on the young brain; whilst an abstruse explanation, or a classical illustration, which may be given in the same connection by one who is a scholar, but not a teacher, though perfectly logical and mathematically correct, and lucid enough too, from his point of view, creates only an impression—if any at all—of wonderment in the young mind, at the long words and unintelligible phrases used.

Difficulty increased in the case of the Blind. This difficulty is increased tenfold when pupils are removed further still from the level of the teacher by the barrier of blindness.

A skilful seeing teacher may in the course of a few weeks master the *peculiar methods* used in teaching the Blind, and be able to give a certain amount of daily instruction to a class of blind children; but it takes him years before he becomes what might be called a “naturalised blind person,” and is able to see things from what I designate the *blind point of view*; whilst he is never in that favourable position enjoyed by the blind teacher—especially a teacher blind from childhood—of being able to say to the child despairing over a difficult sum or piece of music, “see, do it so! I can do it. I am blind like you. If I have learned, so can you.” How often, even the best seeing teachers are met with the rejoinder from one or other of their blind pupils: “Ah, yes! its easy for you. You can see.” If for no other reason, then, it is well to employ blind teachers, because their very presence in such positions in school is a continual incentive and encouragement to the pupils.

Teaching Braille Reading. I have found by experience that a blind teacher is able more readily to explain to his pupils how to recognise and distinguish between the various Braille characters than a seeing one; that is

to say, other things being equal, children under a blind teacher will more rapidly become fluent readers of Braille than those taught exclusively by a seeing teacher.

The reason of this is not far to seek. Although most seeing teachers of the Blind are able to *read* Braille, they do so with their eyes, and I have never met one who could read it with his fingers : though I do not say that some may not be able to recognise a number of the characters, or perhaps all of them very slowly by touch. But the blind teacher, having himself overcome all the technical difficulties—some of which it is almost impossible to explain in so many words—is able to help the little one by sympathetic hints and guidance ; and even by anticipating—as a seeing teacher can very rarely do—the many little stumbling-blocks which present themselves to the young Braille scholar.

Arithmetic. The same argument holds good in the teaching of Arithmetic, and to an equal extent : at any rate where the blind teacher has access, as is the case in our school, to up-to-date class books, test cards, &c., on the subject, and is ready to take advantage of opportunities which occur, for consulting seeing persons who are conversant with the newest methods ; and here I may remark that if there is one error more than another into which a blind teacher is liable to fall, it is the fault of over-conservativeness in methods of teaching, and a general reluctance to accept what is new.

In mental Arithmetic, a good blind teacher will invent a variety of short cuts for arriving at a satisfactory result, which would never occur to a seeing person, and I have no hesitation in saying that a class of children taught by a blind teacher will easily out-strip, in this subject, a similar class taught by a teacher with sight.

Writing In the teaching of Braille writing, there is perhaps **Braille.** not quite so much to be said in favour of the blind teacher, but still, as a rule, the results are quite satisfactory.

Music. In this subject again the blind teacher excels. The old argument comes to the front. A seeing teacher cannot, and does not, play from Braille music ; and very, very

few have a thorough knowledge of the system. They cannot realise what it means to be able to *see* only one line of music at a time, and to have to depend entirely on the imagination for the formation of a chord, the top or bottom note only of which is written in Braille, and on the memory for the playing of a piece at the learning stage. For, even though the blind pupil or teacher may have his music at hand, still if he wishes to refer to it he must stop playing, look up the place—oft times no easy matter—and then resume playing from memory. Thus a blind pupil under a seeing master is much more readily disheartened than if his teacher were blind like himself. Much has been said against the ability of a blind music teacher to give efficient instruction in technique, and to ensure correct fingering; but there is little doubt that after the correct fingering of scales, arpeggios, and finger exercises has been taught, (and this a blind teacher can do quite well by placing his hands upon those of his pupils,) the smoothness and accuracy with which a passage is rendered will tell an intelligent and competent blind music teacher whether the notes are correctly fingered, at least in the great majority of cases.

There is, no doubt, that it is an advantage for a blind pupil to have his progress in music examined from time to time by a skilful seeing master, and to have a finishing course of lessons also from him; but the greater part of the work can be quite efficiently performed by a blind teacher. We can have no better proof of this fact, than the very extraordinary amount of success achieved by the talented Principal of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood, London, as a teacher of music, both before and since he occupied his present position.

Ear This is a subject which should receive far more
Development. attention in our schools than it does. I mean the training of the children to recognise by means of hearing what other people observe by sight. Direction of sound, obstruction on the path, locality, &c., and I suppose no one will deny that these will be best taught by a blind teacher. It is the development of an instinct which none but the

blind can really appreciate and understand, and if carefully cultivated in children will save the pupil from many a hard knock and fall later in life.

Concentration. The blind teacher, as a rule, gives more of his leisure time to thinking over and preparing lessons for school than could reasonably be expected of his seeing colleagues. Having such limited scope for physical and mental recreation, and so much less to occupy the attention out of school hours than his sighted fellow teacher, the blind man's mind reverts back again to what took place during lessons, and occupies itself in comparing and contrasting the individualities and outstanding characteristics of his pupils. The pupils are quick to recognise a sympathetic nature, and without doubt, are more readily influenced either for good or ill by a blind person than by one who can see. There is a sort of innate suspiciousness with which the Blind, young and old, regard those who can see, until they have proved them to be absolutely trustworthy; and this peculiarity is very marked in blind children. That is the reason why I always so strongly urge that it is more essential, if possible, that the teacher of blind children—whether he is blind or sighted—should be “true to his word,” than is the case in a seeing school. If he promises a reward, no matter how small, let him see to it that he fulfils his promise. If he promises a punishment, let him not avoid the infliction of it.

I have now said sufficient, I think, to justify my support of the employment of blind teachers in our schools. Let us go on to consider to what extent they can be so employed successfully and beneficially to all concerned.

Requirements of varied curriculum necessitate Seeing Teachers. In the present day, when so much more is taught to and expected of blind children than used to be the case, it is only natural to expect that we find in the school curriculum some subjects, the teaching of which, require the aid of the seeing. Typewriting, Kindergarten, Sewing, Gymnastics, Swimming, etc., form examples of what I mean. These and similar subjects should be taught by a seeing

teacher, or at any rate, under the supervision of an intelligent seeing person.

Eccentric habits and gestures. Again, as is well known, most blind children are guilty of bad habits, eccentric movements of hands or face, or body, or all three, and some have stooping or other injurious tendencies, all of which require to be looked out for and checked continually. If persistently corrected, an intelligent blind child will quickly acquire sufficient self-control to banish these eccentricities of gesture and injurious habits, whilst if left alone, he will grow up an object of pity—however clever he may be—to all with whom he comes in contact. I know two or three most excellent, highly educated blind gentlemen, who for lack of correction when young, are the victims of *imbecile* movements and gestures which seriously detract from the pleasure and influence which their otherwise splendid personality would exert upon those who esteem them best and love them most.

Success in after Life. The blind boy or girl who hopes to become an intelligent member of society, and to move with grace and ease among his fellows when he goes out into the world, requires a good deal of instruction which a blind teacher cannot, in the nature of things, impart to him, but which he can readily acquire from a seeing teacher.

Conclusion. To conclude in a word, I might say that the education of blind children in those subjects in which the methods of instruction are, necessarily and essentially, totally different from those in vogue for the seeing, is *best* in the hands of a properly qualified blind teacher. The religious and moral training is also quite as safe in his hands as it would otherwise be; but neatness in personal appearance—if anything more essential to success in the blind than the seeing—development of physique, typewriting, many technical employments, and such like; in fact, those subjects in acquiring which the blind must pursue the same or similar methods as the seeing, are best in the hands of a seeing teacher, or at any rate taught under the supervision of a qualified seeing superintendent.

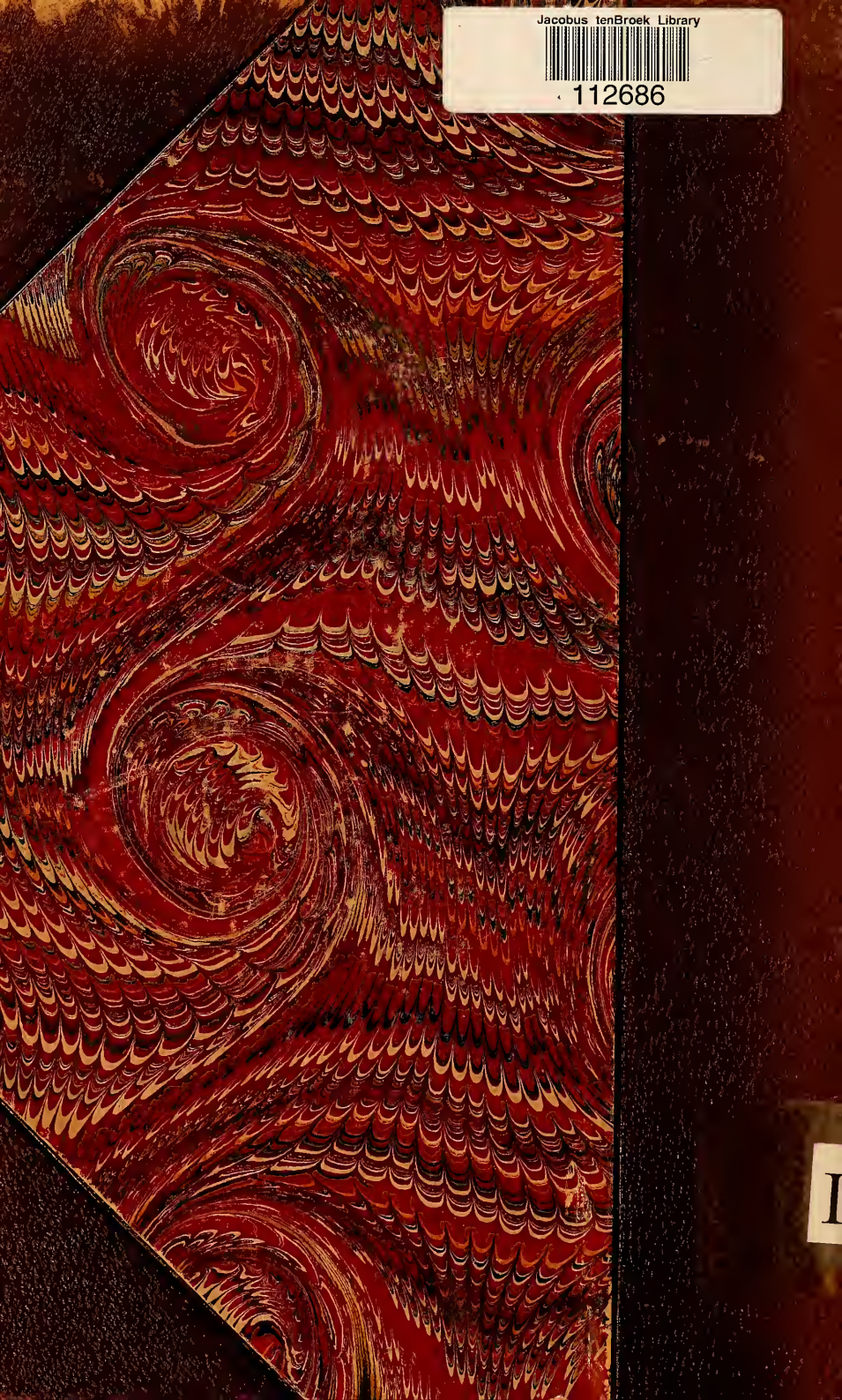
In my opinion it were as foolish to say that an Englishman is a better teacher of French in a French School than a qualified French teacher, as to affirm that a seeing master surpasses one who is blind as a teacher of the blind in those subjects where the methods employed are peculiar to Blind education, that is to say where touch alone is the medium.

Proportion of Blind Teachers. In Britain, many of the Blind Schools have now adopted the class-room system, one class being separated from another by a glazed partition, so that the Principal can exercise a direct supervision over the whole. By this system also three blind teachers and two seeing make an excellent staff for five classes, the seeing teacher being able to call his blind colleague's attention to any misconduct or eccentric movement on the part of any member of his class; and the success which has attended the employment of blind teachers, in about these proportions in British Schools, is, I venture to think, sufficient evidence in support of the position I have taken up as to the desirability and efficacy of employing the blind as teachers of the young Blind.

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